Biology Notes-Genetics and Homosexuality

Bailey and Pillard (1991)

Aim: to investigate if there is a genetic influence for homosexuality.

Design: 161 homosexual males, all over the age of 18 with a MZ twin, DZ twin, or adoptive brother, were studied. Recruitment was through advertisements placed in homosexual publications in several cities in the Midwest and Southwest of the United States. For males with adoptive brothers, they must have entered a common rearing environment when both were no more than 2 years old.

Most of the homosexual males were interviewed in person with informed consent. Questionnaires were sent to the cotwins and adoptive brothers, with a cover letter explaining that they were being asked to participate in a general study of personality, attitudes and behaviour. Five questions regarding sexual orientation were imbedded in over 100 other items about social attitudes, personality, and childhood behaviour.

Findings: Most subjects classified themselves as heterosexual or homosexual, with very few giving evidence of significant bisexuality. The concordance rate of homosexuality was 52% (29/56) for MZ twins, 22% (12/54) for DZ twins, and 11% (6/57) for adoptive brothers.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What the statistic tell us** | **What the statistics don’t tell us** |
|  |  |